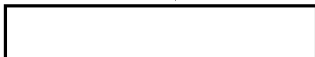


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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Soviet Diplomatic Campaign against Western Rearmament

The new series of Soviet diplomatic notes protesting developments in Europe and the Near East is a reaction to Western initiatives which are making the North Atlantic Treaty Organization a growing threat to the USSR. By the same tactic, the Soviet Union is seeking to counteract the extension of this alliance system through the Eastern Mediterranean, where the USSR feels itself particularly vulnerable to attack. There is no firm indication that any further steps looking toward either retaliatory action or negotiations with the Western powers are contemplated by the Politburo at this time.

The Soviet notes, which are also designed to prepare a record of protest on which the USSR can base future action, include the following:

- 11 September - to France on German remilitarization
- 1 October - to Norway on war graves
- 11 October - to the Western Powers on revision of Italian peace treaty
- 15 October - to Norway on bases
- 19 October - answer to France on German remilitarization
- 31 October - answer to Norway on war graves
- 4 November - to Turkey on adherence to NATO
- 12 November - answer to Norway on bases
- 17 November - to the Western Powers on base at Trieste
- 21 November - to Arab states and Israel on Middle East Command
- 21 November - to the United States on appropriations for subversive activities
- 24 November - to the Western Powers and Turkey on Middle East Command

The determination of the Western Powers to override Soviet opposition at San Francisco, and the subsequent impetus given to Western rearmament by the meetings at Washington, Ottawa and Rome, impressed the USSR with the seriousness of Western rearmament. Intensive Soviet diplomatic activity occurred during other critical periods of NATO evolution, notably in early 1949 with its formation and in late 1950 following the Western decisions on German rearmament.

The USSR may still hope to hinder fruition of NATO in Europe by

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emphasizing once again its strong objections to the "aggressive" nature and aims of the alliance. The USSR probably has a greater expectation of blocking its extension to the Near East because of inflamed nationalism in the Arab states, which jeopardizes military cooperation in that area.

The Soviet notes directed toward Europe were aimed at West German rearmament, the establishment of NATO bases in Norway, revision of the Italian peace treaty, and the status of Trieste -- all of which are closely tied to the Western defense effort.

The current phase of the campaign against NATO was inaugurated in early September by a Soviet note to France which charged that the Pleven and Schuman plans were fostering German remilitarization. The timing and tone of the note suggested an effort to intimidate France on the eve of tripartite talks in Washington, but the French Government maintained a firm stand.

Two Soviet notes to Norway were directed at another facet of Western defense, the strengthening and extension of NATO bases. Norway was accused of violating its treaty commitments and its previous assurances to the Soviet Union by making its territory available for such bases. Concurrently, two strong protests on a relatively minor issue -- Norwegian movement of Soviet war graves -- were probably intended to increase the feeling of strained relations in order to influence Norway's attitude toward NATO bases. Official Norwegian opinion was not unduly disturbed but the government, while remaining steadfast in its commitment to NATO, is now likely to be even more circumspect in negotiations over bases.

A Soviet note to the three Western Powers rejecting their proposal for revision of the Italian peace treaty, as desired by Italy, maintains that the proposal was aimed at more effectively utilizing Italy as a member of NATO. Moscow laid down as one condition for revision of the treaty Italy's withdrawal from NATO. Italy, however, is unlikely to swerve from its present policy supporting NATO.

Closely connected with the Italian treaty is the question of Trieste, which was the subject of still another note to the Western Powers. The USSR charged that Trieste was being converted into a military and naval base linked to the North Atlantic bloc. The note, which took cognizance of a possible Italo-Yugoslav agreement on Trieste, probably reflected Russian concern that successful negotiations on this issue might lead to a rapprochement between the two countries and Yugoslavia's eventual cooperation with NATO.

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The current effort to expand the scope of NATO by creating a Middle East Command, which would embrace the eastern Mediterranean countries as well, evoked a Soviet attempt to deter the Arab states and Israel from participating in such an arrangement. In the Near East, as opposed to Western Europe, where the NATO program has not only been accepted but partially carried out, Moscow has a far greater opportunity to disrupt Western plans. The USSR, quick to exploit the lead taken by Egypt in opposing the proposed Middle East Command, recently issued notes warning the Arab states against adherence. This move, which directly supports current Arab disaffections and aspirations, seeks to arouse suspicion of the Western defense plan as a cover for occupation by foreign troops and the reestablishment of spheres of influence.

Moscow apparently considered Greek and Turkish membership in NATO an inevitable confirmation of their ties to the West, and therefore limited itself to a propaganda attack against these countries at the time of their acceptance in mid-September 1951. The official Soviet warning to Turkey against joining NATO, not delivered until 4 November, merely rounded out Moscow's current documentation of protests to NATO countries. Neither this note nor the protest addressed to Turkey and the three Western powers on their sponsorship of the Middle East Command has influenced Turkey's firm Western orientation.

The series of notes gives no hint of Moscow's future intentions. The notes emphasize that the Soviet Union "cannot remain indifferent" to developments that affect its special interests in Spitsbergen and "the outlet to the sea in the West," which are described as of "extraordinarily great importance to the Soviet Union and the security of the north." Similar language was used to protest the establishment of military bases on Turkish soil at the frontiers of the USSR, but to date, there have been no signs of Soviet retaliatory measures in these areas.

It is impossible to determine, on the basis of present evidence, whether or not these warnings have any portent for the future, nor are there any reliable indications that the USSR will seek to counter Western consolidation by entering into big power negotiations. Recent suggestions for talks have generally met with a cool Soviet response, with the implication that any negotiations will have to hinge on discussion of the whole Western rearmament program.

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